
The
GRIMM
Masquerade
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SKYBOUND
GAMES

The GRIMM Masquerade



2-5 players | Ages 8+ | 20-40 minutes



Objective

In *The Grimm Masquerade*, you take on the role of a fairy-tale character at the Beast's Masquerade Ball. Earn the most of the Beast's magic roses by gathering and distributing artifacts, taking actions to unmask other players, searching for your favorite artifact, and bluffing to keep your character's identity secret.

Standard or Advanced Masquerade?

The Grimm Masquerade has two play modes.

Standard mode: recommended for new players, and also works well for families. It's explained first and in full detail.

Advanced mode: can be played after you have played the standard mode or if your group has extensive board gaming experience. It is explained later in the rules. Advanced mode instructions and tips are marked with a magic wand.



Game Components

Standard mode components

1. Game board
2. 8 Character cards
3. 1 *Point the Finger* board
4. 6 standard Action cards
5. 35 Evidence markers (7 per player)
6. 48 Artifact cards
7. 35 Rose tokens
8. 3 Rose Trophies
9. 7 Player Aid cards
10. 6 Broken Mirror markers

Advanced mode components

11. 5 Treasure tokens
12. 8 Wager cards
13. 1 advanced Action card (*Secrets*)
14. 8 Special Ability cards



Game setup

1. Place the game board in the center of the play area.
2. Each player takes a set of seven Evidence markers of a single color and a Player Aid card.
3. Shuffle the Character cards and deal one face-down to each player. You should look at your card, but make sure not to show it to any other player — this Character is now your secret identity.
4. Place the remaining Character cards face-down next to the board to form the Character deck.
5. Place the Rose tokens next to the board. Place the three Rose Trophies in a stack with the highest value token on the bottom.
6. Place the *Point the Finger* board face-up in the space below the bottom of the board.
7. Randomly select two of the Action cards and place them face-up on either side of *Point the Finger*. Place the remaining Action cards face-down to one side.
8. Shuffle the Artifact cards and place them face-down next to the board to form the Artifact deck.
9. Reveal Artifact cards equal to the number of players plus two. Example: if you have four players, reveal six Artifact cards.
10. The player who most recently wore a costume is the First Player (not shown).
11. In clockwise order starting with the First Player, each player selects one Artifact from the revealed cards and places it face-up in front of them in their tableau.
12. Any Artifact cards not selected by players form the start of the discard pile directly below the Artifact deck.



Two-player variant

Refer to page 12 for details on two-player games.



Advanced mode variants

Refer to page 13 for details on advanced mode games.

Basic game setup

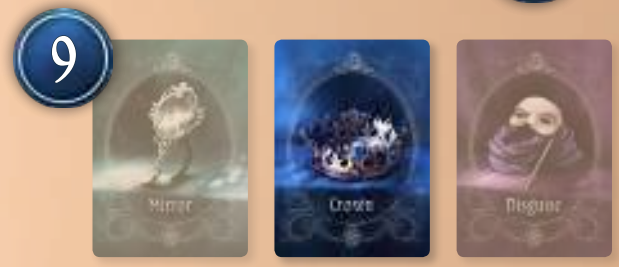
for four players











Each player's setup

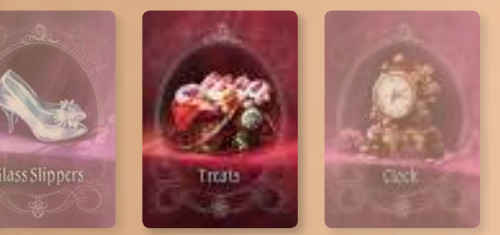














Gameplay overview

The game has three rounds. The player with the most **Roses** at the end of the game is the winner.



Each round has a prize: a **Rose Trophy** worth 1 Rose in the first round, 3 Roses in the second round, and 5 Roses in the third.

Keep your Character secret

You are randomly given a new **Character** each round as your secret identity. You must conceal your own identity while trying to reveal the identity of other players.

Artifacts can be a blessing and a curse



Each character desires three Artifacts of one particular type, their **Boon Artifact**. You can win the round and score the Rose Trophy by collecting three of your character's Boon Artifact.

Each character also detests Artifacts of one type, their **Bane Artifact**. If you're forced to collect two of your character's Bane Artifact, you're immediately **unmasked** (your identity is revealed) and the player who unmasked you scores a Rose.

You start the game with one Artifact that you chose during setup. Then on your turn you must draw an Artifact to keep and an Artifact to give to another player. This is how you can collect your Boon Artifacts, and force other players to collect their Bane Artifacts.

Actions speak louder than words



You can **discard matching pairs** of Artifacts, ideally the ones you don't care about, to use an **Action**. These can help to gain an Artifact you want or get rid of one you don't, or discover more about the identity of other players.

You can also use a **permanent Action** called *Point the Finger* to guess the identity of another player. A correct guess unmasks that player and scores you a total of two Roses, but an incorrect guess scores a Rose for the wrongly accused.

Because other players can guess your identity, you must be careful not to be too obvious about what you collect. Try to bluff them about which Artifact you want and which you don't. You might even keep a pair of Artifacts just to bluff.

Once you are unmasked, you can still give Artifacts to other players on your turn to try to unmask them and score Roses, but you cannot win the Rose Trophy for the round.

At the stroke of midnight...

The round ends when only one player's identity remains secret, winning them the Rose Trophy for that round.

The game ends after Round 3, or if a player has ten Roses at the end of a round.

Characters — Boon & Bane

Each Character has a Boon Artifact and a Bane Artifact. The Boon Artifact is shown in the top-left of the Character card, and the Bane Artifact in the bottom-right.

Artifacts

Each Artifact in the game has the potential to reveal information about yourself and others, so choose carefully which to keep and which to give away.

- Any player who collects three of their Boon Artifact breaks the spell and immediately wins the round.
- Any player who collects two of their Bane Artifact is unmasked.

Round steps

Players take turns in clockwise order until the End of Round is triggered, starting with the current First Player.

Each Player's turn

1. Draw Artifacts

Draw one Artifact from the Artifact deck and choose to keep it, or give it to another player. Then draw a second Artifact and do the opposite of what you chose for the first card.

Example: *If you draw your first card and choose to give it to another player, you must keep the second card you draw. If you keep your first card, you must give away your second card. You cannot draw both cards before deciding.*

Each player places their new card into their own **tableau** (the collection of Artifact cards face-up on the table in front of them) where all players can see them.

Characters & Artifacts



Artifact cards



















Giving out Artifacts is one of the key ways to gather information in the game. By intentionally giving other players Artifacts that create a pair, you force them to reveal information and might even unmask them.

Two matching Artifacts: If you ever have a pair of the same Artifact, you must immediately reveal information about your Character:

- If the Artifacts are your Character's Bane Artifact, you are **unmasked** and must reveal your secret identity. The player who gave you the second Artifact gains a Rose. If you drew your own Bane and were forced to keep it, you do not gain a Rose for unmasking yourself!
- If the Artifacts are not your Character's Bane, you must place an Evidence marker on the game board on the Character whose Bane it is. This reminds everyone else you are not that Character.

Three matching Artifacts: If you ever have three of the same Artifact, you must immediately reveal information about your Character:

- If it is your Character's Boon Artifact, you win the round! Reveal your identity and gain that round's Rose Trophy.
- If it is not your Character's Boon Artifact, you must immediately place an Evidence marker on the game board on the Character whose Boon it is, to remind everyone you are not that Character.

2. Perform an optional Action

After drawing and distributing Artifacts, you may choose to discard a pair of matching Artifacts from your tableau in order to use an Action for a special effect.

Each round, three Action options are available to all players. *Point the Finger* is always available, and another two Actions are revealed at random each round from a possible set of six.

Point the Finger (Permanent)



Guess the identity of another player. If you are correct, that player is unmasked, and you gain two Roses: one Rose for unmasking a player and the other for making a correct guess. If you are incorrect, the wrongly accused player gains a Rose instead.

Eavesdrop



Choose one or two other players. They must each place an Evidence marker on the game board. When you are placing an Evidence marker, you must place it on a Character you are **not** and where you do not already have an Evidence marker. You may not place Evidence markers on Characters who have already been unmasked.

Peek at the Guest List



Without showing other players, look at the top two unused Character cards in the Character deck. Place them back in the Character deck and shuffle the deck.

Start the Dance



Choose one Artifact from your tableau then choose whether to pass it left or right. Each other player must shuffle their tableau and pass one random Artifact in the same direction.

Make a Toast



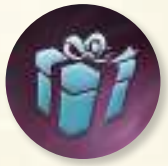
Draw two Artifacts from the Artifact deck and give them to one or more other players of your choice. You may give them both to the same player.

Pick Pocket



Look at one unused Character card. Place it back in the Character deck and shuffle the deck. Then draw one Artifact and decide whether to keep it or give it away.

Thoughtful Gift



Choose an Artifact from your tableau to give to another player of your choice. That player must shuffle their tableau and give you two random Artifacts they own.

Whenever Artifacts are exchanged, they are given simultaneously, so the same Artifact cannot be passed back and forth. No information is revealed until the exchange is complete.

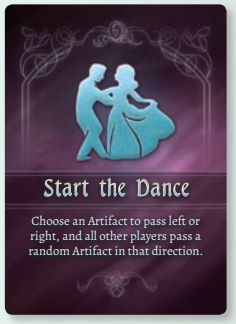
It is possible for a single Action to unmask more than one player. You gain one Rose for each player you unmask.

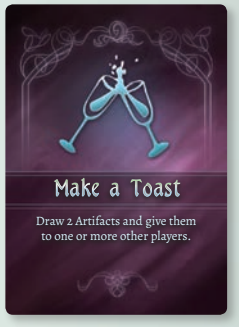
Action cards

















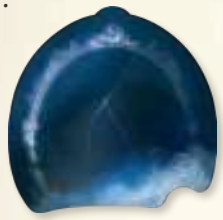
Unmasking a player

Players can be unmasked in two ways:

- ***As soon as they have two of their character's Bane Artifact.***
- ***When another player Points the Finger and correctly guesses their secret identity.***

When you are unmasked, you must immediately:

1. Reveal your secret identity and then remove all Evidence markers from that Character on the game board and cover it with a Broken Mirror marker.
2. Take all of your Artifacts into your hand. You can no longer win the round by gathering three of your Boon Artifacts.



Broken Mirror marker

Playing after you are unmasked

On your turn, draw one Artifact and add it to your hand. Then give one Artifact of your choice from your hand to any player not yet unmasked. You can still gain Roses by unmasking other players this way.

ADVANCED: See "Wagers" section

End of round

The round ends when one of two things happens:

- All but one of the players are unmasked. The player who was not unmasked wins the round and gains the Rose Trophy for that round.
- A player collects three of their Boon Artifacts. That player wins and gains the Rose Trophy for that round.

The Rose Trophy increases in value throughout the game. The trophy for the first round is worth 1 Rose. For the second round it is worth 3 Roses, and for the third round, 5 Roses.

ADVANCED: If any player holds the Wager card of the Character who won, they gain Roses equal to the value of the Rose Trophy.

Reset for the next round of play

All players do the following:

- The player with the fewest Roses is the First Player for the next round. If there is a tie, the player clockwise from the player with the most Roses is the First Player.
- Discard the two Action cards and reveal two new Action cards in their place. *Point the Finger* is available every round, so it stays on the table.
- Remove all Evidence markers from the board. Gather all Character cards, shuffle them well, and deal one to each player. Place the remaining Character cards face-down next to the board.
- Gather all Artifact cards, shuffle them well, and place them face-down next to the board to form the new Artifact deck. Reveal Artifact cards equal to the number of players plus two.
- In turn order from the new First Player, each player takes one Artifact from the revealed cards. Any remaining Artifacts then form the start of the discard pile, and the new round begins.

ADVANCED: Return all Wager cards to the center, and place them face-down next to the board.

The reset step is not needed at the end of the third round.

Game end and Scoring

If any player has 10 or more Roses at the end of a round, the game ends. Otherwise the game ends after Round 3.

Players then count their Roses, and the player with the most Roses is the winner of the game.

In the case of a tie, the tied player with the most points from Rose Trophies is the winner. If the game is still tied, victory is shared.



Additional details

Artifacts in detail

Artifacts are used to gain information by forcing other players to make pairs, to take Actions by discarding pairs, and to win by gaining three of your Boon Artifacts.

There are six copies of each Artifact in the game. In some games, all of your Boon Artifacts may be discarded or used, which eliminates one path to victory for you. In this case, you should focus on unmasking other players to score Roses, and keeping your identity secret.

Roses in detail

There are a few ways to gain Roses, usually by unmasking other players on your turn:



Forcing a pair of Artifacts: If you give a player the card that makes a pair of their Bane Artifact, you unmask them and gain a Rose.



Action: *Point the Finger*. If correct, you gain two Roses (one for guessing correctly and one for unmasking the player). If incorrect, the wrongly accused player gains a Rose.

Actions: *Start the Dance, Make a Toast, Pick Pocket, Thoughtful Gift.* You gain one Rose for each other player unmasked as a result of your Action.

Rose Trophies: The Beast awards a Rose Trophy to the winner of each round. You win the round when all other players are unmasked, or by gaining three of your Boon Artifacts. The Rose Trophy awarded increases in value as the game progresses.

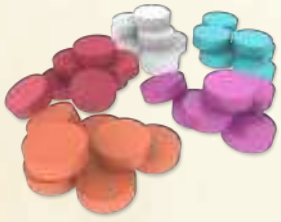




ADVANCED: If any player has the Wager card of the Character who won, they gain Roses equal to the value of the Rose Trophy.

Evidence Markers in detail

You start each round with 7 Evidence markers. Whenever information is revealed about which Character you are **not**, you must mark that information as a reminder to everyone by placing an Evidence marker on that Character's spot on the board.



Important: You may not place your Evidence marker on a Character that already has one of your markers, or on a Character who has been unmasked.

These are the cases where placing an Evidence marker is required:

→ Two matching Artifacts

If a player has a pair of Artifacts and is not unmasked, that means they are not the Character whose Bane is that Artifact. They must mark that Character with an Evidence marker.



Example: *Michael's secret identity is Little Red Riding Hood. Michael receives a second Glass Slipper, which is the Bane Artifact of the Beast. Since he is not the Beast, he must immediately put one of his teal Evidence markers on the Beast as a reminder. That marker stays on the Beast until the end of the round, even if he later discards the Glass Slippers.*

→ Three matching Artifacts

If a player has three copies of an Artifact and does not win the round, that means they are not the Character who favors that Artifact. They must mark that Character with an Evidence marker.



Example: *Amir is given his third Crown. The Crown is the Boon Artifact of the Evil Queen, but since that is not his secret identity, he must place his pink Evidence marker on the Evil Queen as a reminder.*

→ Action: *Point the Finger*

When a player guesses the identity of another player incorrectly, that player must mark the guessed Character with an Evidence marker.



Example: *Michael chooses to Point the Finger, and accuses Collette of being Sleeping Beauty. She is not, so she remains in the game, but places one of her red Evidence markers on Sleeping Beauty.*

→ Action: Eavesdrop

When another player forces you to reveal a character you are **not**, Place your Evidence marker on a Character of your choice. See the example below.



Evidence marker example

A

Amir decides to Eavesdrop on Collette and Michael.

They must each place one of their Evidence markers on a Character they are not.



B

Collette already has Evidence markers on Cinderella, Red Riding Hood, and Sleeping Beauty, so she cannot place another marker on those Characters.



C

Michael already has an Evidence marker on the Beast, so he cannot place another marker on that Character.

Collette and Michael individually decide to place their Evidence markers on the Evil Queen.

D

Two-player variant

A two-player game follows all the rules of the regular game with a few key differences.

Set-up

Give each player the two-player Player Aid. It has an overview of the changes to set-up, gameplay, and scoring.

Deal each player two Character cards instead of one.
Each player has these two Characters. The Artifacts they collect affect both of the Characters.

Reveal six Artifact cards to choose from instead of four.
Players take turns choosing Artifacts until they both have two. Discard the other two Artifacts.

Actions
Remove *Peek at the Guest List*, *Start the Dance*, and *Secrets* from the Action deck before shuffling.

This leaves four Action cards: *Thoughtful Gift, Pick Pocket, Make a Toast, Eavesdrop*. Two are used in Round 1, and two in Round 2. In Round 3, shuffle all four Action cards again and deal two at random.

Gameplay

The round ends when **both** of your Characters are unmasked or when you have collected the three Boon Artifacts for **one** of your Characters to win the Round.



Actions: Any time you take an Action other than *Point the Finger*, gain a Rose.

Advanced variants: Special Ability cards and Treasure may be added to the two-player game, but Wagers cannot.

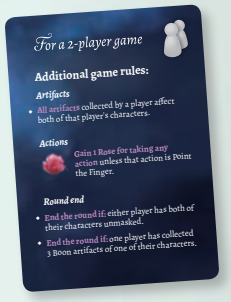
Note: Sometimes your Characters will share a Boon and a Bane, making it impossible to collect three of your Boon without Unmasking your other Character.

In this case, you can choose to allow one Character to be unmasked in order to win with the other, or to bluff the other player into making a wrong accusation, or you can change your strategy to focus on unmasking the other player instead.

Two-player setup

Give each player the following:

A two-player Player Aid



Two Character cards, face-down



Keep the following Actions:





After a few games: Wagers

Wagers are a great way to add depth after your first few games.

Requirement: Add the *Secrets* Action card to the Actions deck during setup. Place the Wager cards to one side of the board during setup.



The Wager cards contain one card for each Character who could be at the Masquerade Ball.

If you possess a Wager card at the end of the round that matches the Character who ultimately won the round, you also win, gaining Roses equal to the value of the Rose Trophy for that round.

You can gain Wager cards in two ways:

Unmasking

If you are unmasked, you may immediately select a Wager card, or you can wait and gather more information before selecting a Wager card on any of your subsequent turns. Be careful not to wait too long, as the round may end suddenly, or another player may take the Wager card you want!

Unmasked players only get to choose one Wager card this way.

When the second-to-last player is unmasked, the round ends immediately. That player does not select a Wager card, since the identity of the winner is already known.

Additional Action: Secrets

Take the Wager deck and select the Wager card of the Character you think will win the round. Place it face-down next to your tableau, making sure not to reveal it to other players. Return the remaining Wager cards face-down next to the board.

You may use this Action on as many of your turns as you wish, as long as you discard a pair of Artifacts each time to pay for it. You can also select the Wager card of your own Character. In this way you are betting on yourself to win the round, potentially doubling the prize!





Advanced mode variants



These Advanced variants can be added to the game individually or played all together. Each variant adds a different level of depth to the game. We recommend starting with the Wagers first and then adding either Treasure or Special Ability cards.

Treasures

Add Treasures to your game for extra bluffing potential.

Requirement: Add the Treasure tokens during setup.



In this variant, players start each round with one Treasure token each. On your turn, you may combine your Treasure token with any Artifact card in your tableau and discard them both to take an Action, instead of discarding a pair of Artifact cards like usual.

In this way, players may discard one of their Bane Artifacts or they may use the Treasure token to bluff by discarding a different Artifact.

If you do not use your Treasure, exchange it for one Rose at the end of the round.

Special Abilities

Requirement: Add the Special Ability cards during setup.

In this variant, the player or players with the fewest Roses gains the Special Ability card for the Character they played in the previous round. During the next round, this special ability is in effect and will help shape their strategy.



Note: *A player's special ability will most likely not match the Character they are playing the current round, as they will have the ability of their Character from the previous round.*

Special Abilities in detail

Evil Queen:

True Reflection

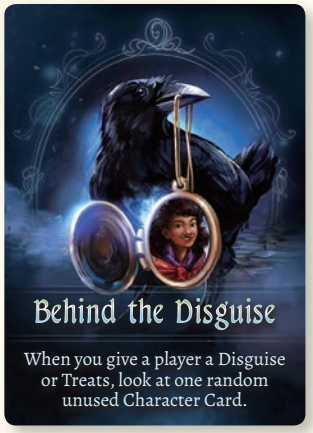
When you give another player a Mirror or a Crown, they must place an Evidence marker to reveal a character they are not.



Red Riding Hood:

Behind the Disguise

When you give another player a Disguise or Treats, you may look at one random unused Character card.



Big Bad Wolf:

What Big Eyes

If you guess incorrectly when you *Point the Finger*, you may look at one random unused Character card.



Hansel:

The Gambler

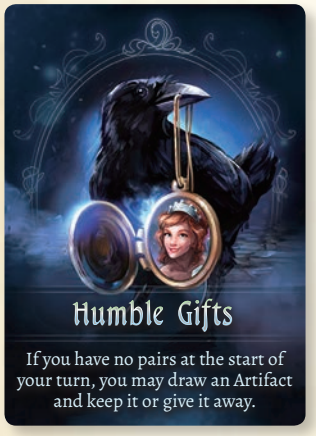
At the start of the round, take one Wager card at random.



Cinderella:

Humble Gifts

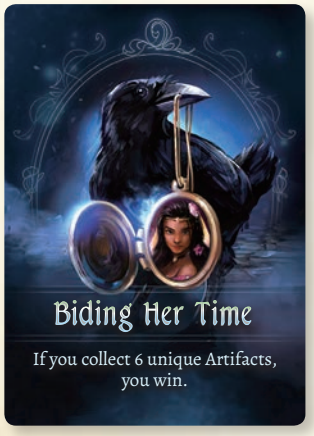
If you have no pairs at the start of your turn, you may draw an Artifact and keep it or give it to another player. This is in addition to your usual turn.



Sleeping Beauty:

Biding Her Time

If you collect six unique Artifacts, you win the round. The round ends immediately, and you gain the Rose Trophy.



Rumpelstiltskin:

Fiendish Accusation

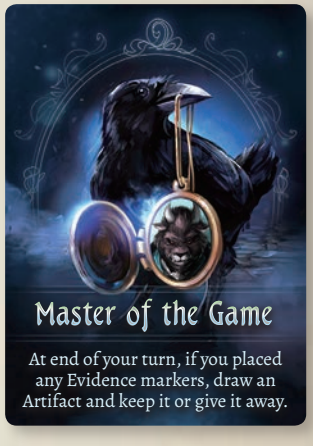
If you guess incorrectly when you Point the Finger, you may draw an Artifact and keep it or give it to another player.



The Beast:

Master of the Game

If you placed any Evidence markers on your turn, then at the end of your turn, draw an Artifact and keep it or give it to another player.





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Many thanks to all the other designers and players who helped make this game the best it could be!

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